

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Little Snake Field Office  
455 Emerson Street  
Craig, CO 81625-1129**

## **CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION**

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-N010-2014-004-CX

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER (optional): COC056651, COC056964

PROJECT NAME: Right-of-Way Assignments from Questar Pipeline Company to QEP Field Services Company

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: Moffat, County,  
6<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian, Colorado  
COC056651 T. 12 N., R. 100 W., sec. 21, lot 5, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
sec. 28, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ , W $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ .  
COC056964 T. 12 N., R. 100 W., sec. 21, lot 5, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

APPLICANT: QEP Field Services Company

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: QEP Field Services Company applied for assignments to transfer right-of-way (ROW) grants COC056651 and COC056964 from Questar Pipeline Company for existing pipelines on public land. COC056651 was issued September 28, 1994 for buried/surface natural gas pipelines to Van Schaick wells C-4, C-7 and 1-C. COC056964 was issued September 28, 1994 for a buried natural gas lateral to service State Well #5. QEP Field Services Company will comply with and be bound by the terms, conditions, and stipulations of the original grants. There will be no new surface disturbance without prior approval.

LAND USE PLAN (LUP) CONFORMANCE REVIEW: The proposed action was reviewed for conformance (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3) with the following plan:

Name of Plan: Little Snake Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan

Date Approved: October 2011

Results: The Proposed Action is in conformance with the LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP goals, objectives, and management decisions:

Allow for appropriate ROW routes and development sites, while identifying areas that will not be compatible with such use. Objectives for achieving these goals include:

- Provide access for the development of roads and trails, utilities, transmission lines, communication sites, and other uses in an environmentally responsible manner.

- Provide access for the development of oil and gas pipeline routes and other uses associated with oil and gas development in an environmentally responsible manner.

Section/Page: Section 2.17 Lands and Realty/ page RMP-52

**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW:** The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 43 CFR Part 46.210 and qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 11.9E (9). This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 43 CFR Part 46.215 applies:

Extraordinary Circumstances	YES	NO
1. Have significant adverse effects on public health and safety.	___	__X__
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.	___	__X__
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].	___	__X__
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.	___	__X__
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.	___	__X__
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.	___	__X__
7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.	___	__X__
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.	___	__X__
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.	___	__X__
10. Have the potential for a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).	___	__X__
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).	___	__X__

12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).	____ <u>X</u> ____
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INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

Title	Resource	Date
Archaeologist	Cultural Resources	01/09/2014 KAR
Rangeland Mgmt Spec	T&E Plants	01/07/2014 ARH
Wildlife Biologist	T&E Animals	01/08/2014 DMA

COMPLIANCE PLAN: The ROWs will be checked for compliance with terms, conditions and stipulations on a five-year schedule. Responsibility for the compliance schedule and monitoring plan will be assigned to the Realty staff in the Little Snake Field Office. The primary inspector will be the Realty Specialist.

NAME OF PREPARER: Louise McMinn

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR:

DATE:

COMPLIANCE WITH NEPA

This action is listed in the Department Manual (516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516 DM 11) as an action that may be categorically excluded. I have evaluated the action relative to the 12 criteria listed above and have determined that it does not represent an exception and is, therefore, categorically excluded from further environmental analysis.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ Timothy Wilson, for  
Wendy Reynolds, Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 01/27/14

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision, contact Louise McMinn, Realty Specialist, Little Snake Field Office, 455 Emerson Street, Craig, CO 81625, Phone (970) 826-5070.

Exhibit A  
Stipulations  
QEP Field Services Company ROW Assignments

1. The holder shall construct, operate, and maintain the facilities, improvements, and structures within this right-of-way in strict conformity with the plan(s) of development which was (were) approved and made part of the original grants. Any relocation, additional construction, or use that is not in accord with the approved plan(s) of development, shall not be initiated without the prior written approval of the authorized officer. A copy of the complete right-of-way grant, including all stipulations and approved plan(s) of development, shall be made available on the right-of-way area during any construction, operation, and termination. Noncompliance with the above will be grounds for an immediate temporary suspension of activities if it constitutes a threat to public health and safety or the environment.
2. The holder shall not initiate any construction or other surface disturbing activities on the right-of-way without the prior written authorization of the authorized officer. Such authorization shall be a written notice to proceed issued by the authorized officer. Any notice to proceed shall authorize construction or use only as therein expressly stated and only for the particular location or use therein described.
3. The rights-of-way shall terminate without further action or notice on the part of this Bureau if at any time subsequent to its effective date, the pipeline facilities authorized are no longer necessary for the holder to service an active oil and gas well.
4. Any cultural and/or paleontological (fossil) resource (historic or prehistoric site or object) discovered by the holder, or any person working on his behalf, on public or Federal land shall be immediately reported to the authorized officer. Holder shall suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery until written authorization to proceed is issued by the authorized officer. An evaluation of the discovery will be made by the authorized officer to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural or scientific values. The holder will be responsible for the cost of evaluation and the authorized officer will make any decision as to proper mitigation measures after consulting with the holder.
5. The operator is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the operations that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing historic or archaeological sites, or for collecting artifacts. If historic or archaeological materials are encountered or uncovered during any project activities, the operator is to immediately stop activities in the immediate vicinity of the find and immediately contact the authorized officer (AO) at (970) 826-5000. Within five working days, the AO will inform the operator as to:
  - Whether the materials appear eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
  - The mitigation measures the operator will likely have to undertake before the identified area can be used for project activities again; and
  - Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g) (Federal Register Notice, Monday, December 4, 1995, Vol. 60, No. 232) the holder of this authorization must notify the AO, by telephone at (970) 826-5000, and with written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), you must stop

activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the authorized officer.

6. If the operator wishes, at any time, to relocate activities to avoid the expense of mitigation and/or the delays associated with this process, the AO will assume responsibility for whatever recordation and stabilization of the exposed materials may be required. Otherwise, the operator will be responsible for mitigation costs. The AO will provide technical and procedural guidelines for the conduct of mitigation. Upon verification from the AO that the required mitigation has been completed, the operator will then be allowed to resume construction.
7. The grant does not relieve you of your responsibility to obtain other required federal, state, or local permits.
8. The holder(s) shall comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations existing or hereafter enacted or promulgated. In any event, the holder(s) shall comply with the Toxic Substances Control Act of 1976, as amended (15 U.S.C. 2601, et seq.) with regard to any toxic substances that are used, generated by or stored on the right-of-way or on facilities authorized under this right-of-way grant. (See 40 CFR, Part 702-799 and especially, provisions on polychlorinated biphenyls, 40 CFR 761.1-761.193.) Additionally, any release of toxic substances (leaks, spills, etc.) in excess of the reportable quantity established by 40 CFR, Part 117 shall be reported as required by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, Section 102b. A copy of any report required or requested by any Federal agency or State government as a result of a reportable release or spill of any toxic substances shall be furnished to the authorized officer concurrent with the filing of the reports to the involved Federal agency or State government.
9. The holder of Rights-of-Way No. COC 056651 and COC056964 agrees to indemnify the United States against any liability arising from the release of any hazardous substance or hazardous waste (as these terms are defined in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, 42 U.S.C 9601, et.seq. or the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976, 42 U.S.C. 6901, et. seq.) on the right-of-way (unless the release or threatened release is wholly unrelated to the right-of-way holder's activity on the right-of-way). This agreement applies without regard to whether a release is caused by the holder, its agent, or unrelated third parties.
10. Holder shall maintain the right-of-way in a safe, usable condition, as directed by the authorized officer. The holder shall furnish and apply water or other means satisfactory to the authorized officer for dust control. No routine maintenance activities shall be performed during periods when the soil is too wet to adequately support construction equipment. If such equipment creates ruts in excess of three inches deep, the soil shall be deemed too wet to adequately support construction equipment.
11. No hazardous materials/waste or trash shall be disposed of on the public lands. If a release does occur, it shall be reported to the Little Snake Field Office immediately (970) 826-5000. Any spills will be cleaned up to applicable standards.

12. The holder shall conduct all activities associated with the operation, maintenance, and termination of the right-of-way within the authorized limits of the right-of-way. New access roads or cross-country vehicle travel will not be permitted unless prior written approval is given by the authorized officer.

13. Control of noxious weeds will be required through successful vegetation establishment and/or herbicide application. It is the responsibility of the lease operator to insure compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations, as well as labeling directions specific to the use of any given herbicide.

14. A Pesticide Use Proposal (PUP) will be approved prior to application of herbicides and/or other pesticides on Federal surface; contact the Little Snake Field Office to obtain a PUP form to request this authorization. Submit the PUP two (2) months in advance of planned application. In the event you elect to apply herbicide or other pesticide as described and authorized on the approved PUP, you must report this use within 24 hours on Bureau of Land Management form titled Pesticide Application Record.

15. The holder shall seed all disturbed areas, using an agreed upon method suitable for the location. Seeding shall be repeated if a satisfactory stand is not obtained after the second growing season.

16. RECLAMATION:

The holder is required to use the reclamation practices necessary to reclaim all disturbed areas. Reclamation will ensure surface and subsurface stability, growth of self-generating, permanent, vegetative cover and compatibility with post land use. The vegetation will be diverse and of the same seasonal growth as adjoining vegetation. Post land use will be determined by the authorized officer but normally will be the same as adjoining uses.

Reclamation practices which must be applied or accomplished are: re-grading to the approximate original contour, effectively controlling noxious weeds, separating, storing and protecting topsoil for redistribution during final abandonment, seeding and controlling erosion. If topsoil is not present, or quantities are insufficient to achieve reclamation goals, a suitable plant growth media will be separated, stored and protected for later use. Reclamation will begin with the salvaging of topsoil and continue until the required standards are met. If use of the disturbed area is for a short time (less than one year), practices, which ensure stability, will be used as necessary during the project, and practices needed to achieve final abandonment will commence immediately upon completion of the approved activity use and be completed, with the exception of vegetative establishment, within one year.

If use of the area is for longer periods of time (greater than one year), interim reclamation is required on the unused areas. Interim reclamation of the unused areas will begin immediately upon completion of the permanent facility(s) and be completed, with exception of vegetative establishment, within one year. For both short and long term projects vegetative establishment will be monitored annually. If the desired vegetation is not established by the end of the second growing season, cultural practices necessary for establishment will be implemented prior to the beginning of the next growing season. Interim reclamation, unless otherwise approved, will

require meeting the same standards as final abandonment with the exception of original contour, which may be only partially achievable.

Annual reports consisting of reclamation practices completed and the effectiveness of the reclamation will be provided to the Little Snake Field Office. The first report will be due in January following initiation of reclamation practices and annually thereafter until final abandonment is approved.

There are numerous reclamation practices and techniques that increase the success rate of reclamation and stabilization. With the exception of those stated above, it is the lessee's prerogative to use those (s)he chooses to accomplish the objective. However, it is recommended that state-of-the-art reclamation, stabilization, and management practices be used to achieve the desired objective in a timely and cost-effective manner.

The following definitions and measurements will be used to accomplish and determine if reclamation has been achieved:

Permanent vegetative cover will be accomplished if the basal cover of perennial species, adapted to the area, is at least ninety (90) percent of the basal cover of the undisturbed vegetation of adjoining land or the potential basal cover as defined in the Soil Conservation Service Range Site(s) for the area.

Diverse will be accomplished if at least two (2) perennial genera and three (3) perennial species, adapted to the area, make up the basal cover of the reclaimed area in precipitation zones thirteen (13) inches or less and three (3) perennial genera and four (4) perennial species in precipitation zones greater than thirteen (13) inches. One species will not make up more than fifty (50) percent of the perennial vegetation by basal cover.

Self-regenerating and adapted to the area will be evident if the plant community is in good vigor, there is evidence of successful reproduction, and the species are those commonly used and accepted in the area.

Surface stability will be accomplished if soil movement, as measured by deposits around obstacles, depths of truncated areas, and height of pedestalling, is not greater than three tenths (0.3) of an inch and if erosion channels (rills, gullies, etc.) are less than one (1) inch in depth and at intervals greater than ten (10) feet.

If this standard is not met by the end of the second growing season, two alternatives exist depending on the severity of the erosion:

If erosion were greater than two (2) times the allowable amount, corrective action would have to be taken by the responsible company at that time.

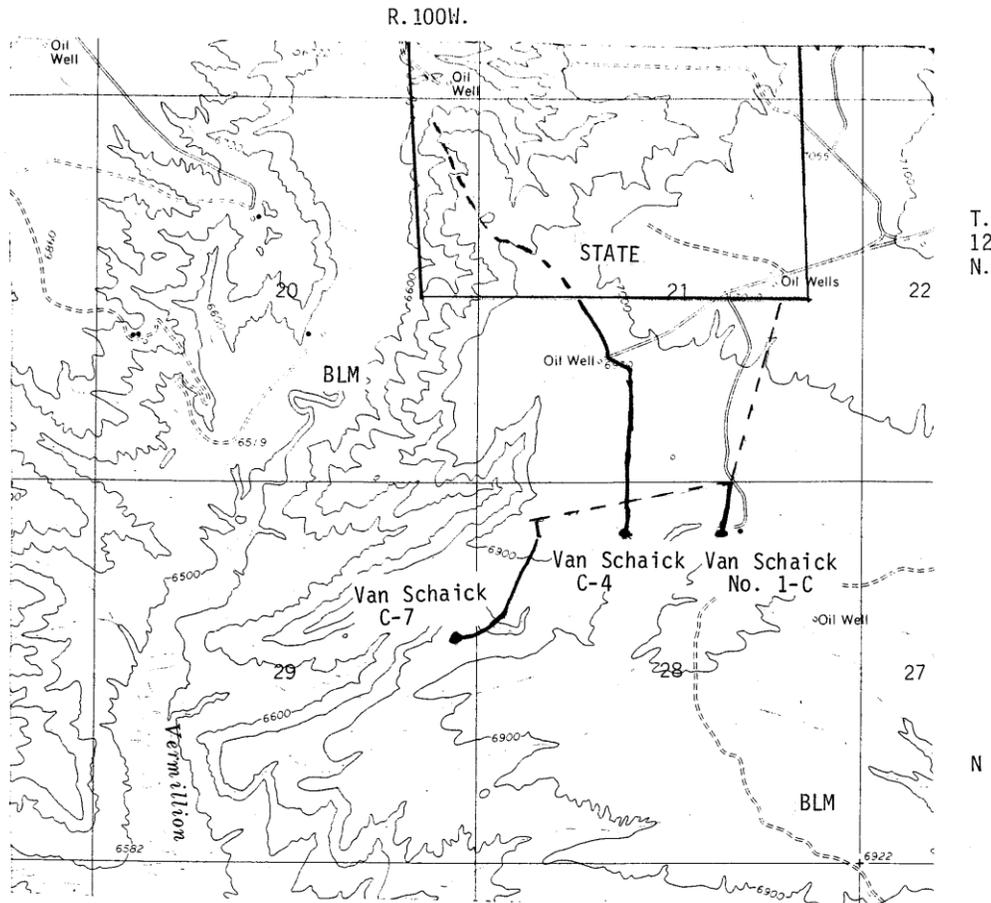
If erosion is less than or equal to two (2) times the allowable amount, and it is determined the erosion occurred during vegetative establishment and the site may become stable, no corrective action would be required at that time. Another check (and measurement) would be performed a year later to determine if stability standards had been met. If the original measurements have not

increased by more than the allowed standard, the standard would be considered met. However, if the increase were greater than the allowed standard, corrective action would be required.

Subsurface stability (mass wasting event) is of concern if disturbance has included excavation over four (4) feet in depth and greater than 10,000 square feet in area on slopes thirty five (35) percent and greater, or on any erosion-prone slope (Danforth Hills, Vermillion Bluffs, and badland areas). When these conditions occur, length of liability for reclamation and final abandonment will continue for ten (10) years following re-contouring to original contour or for such time that climatic patterns provide two (2) consecutive years in which measurable precipitation totals at least 120 percent of average from October 1 through September 30, as measured by data averaged from nearby regional weather stations.

The Authorized Officer may waive this stipulation, or portions of it. Such waiver will be documented and justified when not applicable, or when objectives are accomplished through another method.

17. Prior to termination of the right-of-way, the holder shall contact the authorized officer to arrange a pretermination conference. This conference will be held to review the termination provisions of the permit.



Existing Pipeline - - -

Map Source:  
Sugar Loaf Butte  
7.5 Minute Quad (Topo)  
Scale 1:24000